



# M.O.F.W.

NEWSLETTER

Editor-Publisher:

MAJ (USA, RET) George C. Miller, Jr.

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## The Commander-General's Message

Dear Companions of the Order,

I begin this letter to you by expressing my utmost surprise of the events surrounding my very short tour of duty as the Senior Vice-Commander General. While I was unable to attend the last Convention of the Order in Texas, due to a longstanding commitment wherein Commander-General Emeritus Wulf Lindenau and I have been co-hosting an annual Black-Tie event with the Special Forces Association to honor Wounded Warriors, I did keep in touch with members of the Order and was completely surprised when our newly appointed Commander-General suddenly resigned.



Since being notified that I have become the next Commander-General effective 1 August 2015, I have been reviewing the reports coming out of the last Convention, the activities that I have been previously involved with, and seeking my own direction for the Order. As most of you may recall, I have served as Secretary-General of the Order for approximately 2 ½ years, then Junior and Senior Vice-Commander General, and Commander of the Washington D.C. and Virginia Commanderies. This having been said, I believe I do understand the Order, and more importantly, I believe it is safe to say that my first order of business will be to select a Secretary-General with whom I can work. In the short interim, CG Emeritus Lindenau has graciously agreed to help me out with this task.

I believe our most important task is currently that of recruiting new members. In this regard, I fully understand that most Veteran Organizations are all experiencing virtually the same problem with recruiting the young members of today's Armed Forces. For this reason, I believe we need to do our utmost to attract dynamic guest speakers for our MOFW Commandery meetings. And, don't forget that most of our members have great experiences themselves that may make dynamite presentations. Make our members welcome and ask them to participate in your meetings.

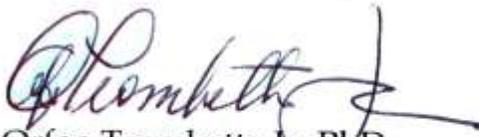
On a broader scale, I intend to take a very hard look at all of our leadership positions and the general direction that we have been going in to ensure that we are doing what we can to grow our distinguished organization. I will engage the National Council in all matters as required and all other leaders within the Order to enlist their support and counsel.

I have had some limited discussions already regarding the Constitution of the Order and I too believe it needs to be reviewed, updated where necessary, and it needs to be coordinated with some of the other documents that we intend to use throughout the Order to ensure that we are all on the same sheet of music. In this regard I will also take a hard look at all of the committees recently formed and will let you know where we will go from here.

I intend to lead this Order with transparency and an open agenda and I look to all of you for your suggestions, advice, and counsel. If you are having personal problems, let us know, perhaps we can help, but don't just stop participating in the Order's activities. You are part of our family and we will do what is possible to assist you.

Within the next month, I will establish and circulate my list of priorities and ask for your assistance in these matters. As an aging organization, we must all participate in the organization and we must attempt to attract new and younger members. However, in this regard, we must also ensure that all new members are fully qualified to belong to our Order. I shall ask the Judge Advocate General to prepare a very short list of basic membership "Requirements" which we can share with everyone in the Order. Every member of the Order must become a Recruiter if we are to survive and grow.

In closing, I want each of you to know that I am excited about being the Commander-General of the Order and that I will do my utmost to move the Order forward and seek improvements wherever possible.



Dr. Orfeo Trombetta Jr, PhD  
Commander-General



# Convention Photos



# Convention Photos (Cont.)



**MOFWUS NATIONAL STAFF 2015 - 2017**

As of 1 September 2015

<b>COMMANDER-GENERAL</b>	<b>LTC Orfeo "Chuck" Trombetta Jr.</b>
<b>SENIOR VICE COMMANDER-GENERAL</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER-GENERAL</b>	<b>COL Arthur N. Tulak</b>
<b>COMMANDER-GENERAL EMERITAS &amp; SECRETARY-GENERAL (Acting)</b>	<b>MAJ Wulf R. Lindenau</b>
<b>DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS</b>	<b>CAPT Kent S. Webber</b>
<b>TREASURER-GENERAL</b>	<b>COL Charles Daniel McCall</b>
<b>DEPUTY TREASURER-GENERAL</b>	<b>COL John J. White III</b>
<b>REGISTRAR-GENERAL</b>	<b>MAJ George Miller</b>
<b>DEPUTY REGISTRAR-GENERAL</b>	<b>LTC Raoul A. Riccardi</b>
<b>JUDGE ADVOCATE-GENERAL</b>	<b>MAJ Frederick L. Hauck Jr.</b>
<b>DEPUTY JUDGE ADVOCATE-GENERAL</b>	<b>COL Michael Fitzpatrick</b>
<b>SURGEON-GENERAL</b>	<b>COL Michael E. Carey M.D.</b>
<b>CHAPLAIN-GENERAL</b>	<b>Rev. Philip G. Salois</b>
<b>QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL</b>	<b>CW3 Brad Hopkins</b>
<b>HISTORIAN-GENERAL</b>	<b>COL Joseph M. Crews</b>
<b>WEBMASTER-GENERAL &amp; NEWSLETTER EDITOR</b>	<b>MAJ George Miller</b>
<b>DEPUTY WEBMASTER-GENERAL</b>	<b>LTC Mark G. Hartell</b>

# COMMANDERY NEWS

**\* Florida:** LTC Dennis E. Foley presents the MOFWUS ROTC Award to Cadet Cade Toney for leadership. The award was presented at the Hernando High School Air Force Junior ROTC awards banquet on May 1, 2015.



**\* Georgia:**

On 6 May at North Cobb High School MOFWUS *Commander Emeritus* Major Wulf Lindenau presents MOFWUS award for **Military Excellence** Cadet Austin Basham (Left) and the MOFWUS award for **Academics** to Cadet Tomas King. (Right)



**\* Hawaii:** The Hawaii Commandery, Military Order of Foreign Wars, once again conducted the 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War Cadet Essay Contest, open to all Hawaii JROTC and Civil Air Patrol Cadets. This year saw some excellent submissions, as well as a demonstration of how last year's essays have encouraged other Cadets to find ways to honor Vietnam Veterans.

Our first prize essayist was Cadet Brandee M. Schiller, Mililani High School JROTC. Cadet Schiller is an LET3 at Mililani High School Army JROTC. Her excellent essay titled "50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War," examined the duties of the citizenry to support their military in time of war, and to honor and remember their sacrifices.



COL (Ret) James Robinson presents the 1<sup>st</sup> Place Essay Certificate to Cadet Brandee Schiller of Mililani High School

On June 18, 2015 at Pearl Harbor, Companions welcomed the Vietnam Veterans as they arrived for the ceremony and presented pins and decals from the DoD 50th Commemorative Committee to Vietnam Veterans and their families to thank them for their service.



\* **New York:** The Annual Meeting of the New York Commandery was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September at Aleo Restaurant, 7 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, New York 10011. The evening commenced with the election of the 2015 Slate of Officers and companions of the Council followed by a cocktail reception and dinner. The featured speaker for the event was Terry Dinan who managed the officers' and enlisted mess halls, the Officer's Club, the senior NCO Club, the enlisted men's club, the commissary and the currency exchange and billeting services for Can Tho in the Mekong Delta and the author of the book *Talk About a Mess: It Happened in Vietnam*.



#### **Slate of Officers & Companions of the Council Year 2015 – Year 2016**

Commander:	Capt. W. J. McShane
Vice Commander:	LTJG Harvey McKinney Bragg
Secretary:	Maj. Daniel L. Hooker
Treasurer:	MAJ. John C. Straton Jr.
Registrar:	CPT Gary L. Dycus
Judge Advocate:	CPT. Owen C. Smith

#### **COMPANIONS OF THE COUNCIL**

##### **CLASS OF YEAR 2015**

LTC Stephen Ryan  
CDR John F.V. Cupschalk

##### **CLASS OF YEAR 2016**

Capt. Dave Simpson  
LT Jonathan Jones

\* **Ohio:** The Ohio Commandery had a link on the national MOWF web-site, but our webmaster left the Ohio Commandery and the website of the Ohio Commandery was shut down. We have created a new website for the Ohio Commandery and I am asking you to make a link to the Ohio Commandery website. Here is the link to the Commandery website: <http://mofwohio.com/>



Companions of the Ohio Commandery attended the Ohio Medina County Veterans Banquet 3 October 2015.

Pictured in the first picture from left to right are: LTC Larry Ashbaugh, USA Ret., MG Dan Hahn, USA Ret., Cpt Don Bratton, USA Former, LTC Jim Halterman, USA Ret., BG Tom Luczynski, Ret, COL Dave Taylor, USA Ret.

Pictured in the second picture from left to right is : LTC Larry Ashbaugh, USA Ret, BG Tom Luczynsk, ARNG Ret, and LTC Jim Halterman, USA Ret.

It was an enjoyable evening of camaraderie as we joined members of the Ohio Western Reserve Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (OWRC-MOAA).

Joining the OWRC-MOAA as the two organizations attended the Third Annual Medina County Veterans Banquet allowed us to join the larger event hosted by the Veterans Coalition of Medina County. Our companion, COL Dave Taylor, USA Ret. is the president of the Veterans Coalition of Medina County and I congratulate him on a very successful and enjoyable evening.

Since we had several officers in uniform we made a real presence which allowed us to ask other officers who were not members to join our organizations.

**\* Rhode Island:** On Saturday, 23 May at the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery, a memorial monument was dedicated by LTC (USA, Ret) Bert Guarnieri, RIMOFW Commander. There were approximately seventy people on hand to share in the ceremonies. We would like to thank everyone who donated to this memorial

After the Dedication, all attending went to the "Officer's Club" at Quonset Point for the RIMOFW "Change-of-Command" ceremony. Outgoing LTC (USA, Ret) Bert Guarnieri relinquished command to BG (USA, Ret) James Reed.



**\* US Military Academy:** Col Ryan presents MOFWUS award to DMG 2LT Corbett in a ceremony held at the United States Military Academy, West Point, NY.



**\* US Naval Academy:** The U.S. Naval Academy conducted its Prizes and Awards Ceremony on May 21, 2015, in Alumni Hall. Commander George L. Breeden, USN (Ret), Maryland Commandery, presented the Military Order of Foreign Wars Prize (a watch and a plaque) to Midshipman First Class Connor J. O'Donnell for graduating highest in the entire course of instruction at the Naval Academy for those having completed a major administered by the Mathematics Department. Upon graduation and following leave, newly commissioned Ensign O'Donnell will report for aviation training in Pensacola, FL, leading to assignments in naval aviation. He is the son of Brian and Liane O'Donnell of Freeport, ME.

**\* US Coast Guard Academy:** LCDR (USGC, Ret) REV Patrick R. Perkins presents the MOFWUS Award to 1/c Devon F. Rohde at an awards ceremony on May 19 2015 in Groton, CT.



**\* Texas A&M:** MOFW Texas Commander Mike Belcher with Air Force Cadet Matthew Lengyel and Navy Cadet Meghan Massey at the Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets Annual Award Ceremony on Saturday, April 18, 2015. Another recipient, Army Cadet Austin Howard was unable to attend.

Gig 'Em Aggies!"

# Uncommon Valor: A True Story of WWII Heroism



Firefight: A US soldier uses a flamethrower on a Japanese position in Manila at the close of World War II. US-Filipino cooperation was crucial. Photo: Getty Images

Lee Casper and Dick Schmeelk served on board the submarine USS Blackfinn off the Philippines in 1945, fighting in the Pacific theater of WWII. Casper shared the following story from 1944 with Schmeelk and James MacGuire, who relates it here to share with our readers on Memorial Day.

We were on patrol before Christmas in the South China Sea. We'd just torpedoed merchant ships and tankers and attempted an attack on two Japanese battleships and three heavy cruisers, which sighted us and forced us to dive deep. Suddenly our orders changed.

When we surfaced, our skipper received a coded radio message ordering us on a secret mission. Captain Laird called 12 of us to the control room. We were to rendezvous at sea with a group of Filipino guerrilla fighters and their leaders, two American Army officers. These men had managed to capture a Japanese patrol boat and, with it, a set of their top-secret patrol books — a tremendous prize the US Fleet commanders wanted to take advantage of before the Japanese high command learned of their loss.

Our instructions were to meet these men in the waters off the shore of the large island on Mindoro, about 100 miles south of Manila, where a fierce battle for that city was then under way.

Because I had been sent to the Navy's night-vision school, I was selected as one of the lookouts to be stationed topside. What a shock when I saw less than a quarter-mile away a major Japanese fortification! Even without binoculars I could clearly see soldiers milling about the gun emplacements. We got a coded message from the Army saying that enemy patrol boats had been too close for them to come out: "Let's try again tomorrow night, same time and place."

When we surfaced and took our watch positions the next night, we were rewarded very quickly. A dim shape appeared off our port bow. We heard a low voice call out, "Ahoy! The submarine." Up on the bow, Gunner Signore, boat hook in hand, answered, "Who the hell are you?" The voice came back, "Captain somebody, US Army, and seven crew." Captain Laird ordered the men on deck to secure the vessel alongside and assist its crew to come aboard.

The vessel turned out to be a long native canoe called a banco. The American officers were dressed in khaki shorts and tattered skivvy shirts. The Filipinos were bare from the waist up.

## WWII Heroism (Continued)

The two Army captains, it turned out, were escapees from the notorious Bataan Death March. Friendly natives kept them alive and assisted them to Mindoro, where they discovered a small band of young men who were doing whatever they could to sabotage and disrupt the Japanese. They eagerly accepted the Americans as leaders and were trained into an effective fighting force. In addition to the Japanese code books they had acquired, the Americans had mapped all the troop locations, gun emplacements, ammunition and supply dumps on the entire island.

The Army guys handed over two large, waterproof satchels containing the captured codes and maps to Captain Laird. The captain passed the word among the entire crew that whatever clothing we could all spare would be greatly appreciated by the guerrillas. Laird then ordered all of our small-arms ammunition, Thompson submachine guns, hand grenades and a dozen Colt .45s to go with the guerrillas. We were headed for Australia as soon as this job was finished and were quite generous, even throwing in our mattress covers and cigarettes. When the stuff was ready to go, it was all passed topside and offloaded into the canoe.

That was when we got our biggest surprise. We had all assumed that the two Army officers, having survived the torture and inhumanity of the Bataan Death March and led these Filipino men in heroic resistance to the Japanese, would call it quits and come to Australia with the rest of us; but no. When the last Filipino man ascended the conning tower ladder, the two Army guys shook hands and said goodbye to all around. Then they followed the guerrillas, climbed quietly into the canoe, picked up their paddles and slipped away into the darkness.

Later, Captain Laird told us he had urged the men to join us. But the Americans replied that the guerrillas had become like brothers to them, and they could not even consider leaving until the Japanese had been completely driven out. We waited an hour before starting our motors to make sure our new friends were well away. Because our commander was anxious to get the code books as quickly as possible, we rendezvoused with the Australian destroyer H.M.A.S. Kiama off the island of Morotoi in the Molucca Sea, made the transfer and arrived in Perth for two weeks of R&R well before Christmas.

A small postscript to the story: You'll remember we had been sworn to secrecy? Imagine our surprise when the Christmas issue of LIFE Magazine contained a feature story about the taking of Mindoro Island by US forces without the loss of a single life thanks to an unnamed US submarine that had obtained maps of the island's installations ahead of the American attack. I've never heard another accounting of this incident or the incredible valor of the two American Army officers who risked their lives all over again to make it happen. Whoever they were, and wherever they are now, today we should all offer a long-overdue "Thank you."

James MacGuire advises the White House Writers Group. Anyone with knowledge of the two American Army officers can email [jpmacguire@gmail.com](mailto:jpmacguire@gmail.com).



# Medals of the Order



## **The Distinguished Service Medal (Gold Star)**

Awarded by the Commander- General or by vote of the Order in convention for distinguished service to the Order involving accomplishment(s) of great significance.

## **The Exceptional Service Medal (Silver Star)**

Awarded by the Commander-General for exceptional service to the Order involving accomplishment(s) of importance to the Order but not of such a nature as to warrant award of the Distinguished Service Medal.



## **The Meritorious Service Medal (Bronze Star)**

Awarded by the Commandery Commander or a vote of the Commandery Council for accomplishments of importance to that commandery.



# Convention Recap

by MAJ Michael Belcher

National and State Commandery Officers, National Delegates, State Delegates, Companions, and guests gathered on 30 April – 2 May 2015 in Galveston, TX for the 52<sup>nd</sup> Convention of the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States (MOFW). The outstanding venue, the Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa, and Convention Center set the gold standard for future MOFW National Conventions by providing the setting for an exciting and successful three days!

Convention activities were non-stop from the time of the traditional Commander-General's Reception on Thursday evening to the final farewells at the elegant MOFW Convention Banquet on Saturday night. During his reception, Commander-General David Russell formally installed the Texas Commandery's newly elected staff. MOFW JROTC awards were presented to two outstanding cadets from the Atascocita High School JROTC program, Crystal Cardenas and Sean Castleman, with their cadre and parents in attendance. U. S. Military Academy Cadet Nominee Justin Augustine was presented with a preparatory scholarship from the Texas Commandery. Mark Henry, a MOFW Companion and Galveston County Judge, spoke to the group and was presented with a MOFW Exceptional Service Medal by Commander-General Russell. City Councilman Norman Pappous read a City of Galveston Proclamation honoring the MOFW. The camaraderie and food were excellent; and a great evening was had by all.

The reception was followed by a National Council Meeting for the purpose of ratifying actions that had been agreed upon by the National Council during the past 30 months and approving other issues prior to the formal start of the Convention itself. A quorum was declared with 12 of the 20 existing State Commanderies in attendance – California, District of Columbia, European & African, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio, Rhode Island, and Texas. Key issues ratified or resolved were the following: (1) the use of Robert's Rules of Order – Newly Revised edition; (2) travel fees to be reimbursed to attendees; (3) announcement of the establishment of a new Commandery – Indiana; (4) revitalization of the Texas and New Jersey Commanderies; (5) discussion of the collection of National Dues ("Head Tax") and the procedures for accomplishing this; (6) IRS 501 (c) 3 - Tax Status for the MOFW and associated State Commanderies; (7) a motion was passed to engage legal services for \$3,000 to establish trademark and copyright protection for the name and logo of the Order; (8) a National Awards Committee was established to standardize and oversee National Awards; (9) a standing committee, the Governance Committee, was established to review the Constitution, Bylaws, and Organization & Functions Manual (O&FM) and to devise an architecture of rules, regulations, procedures, and to propose these changes to the National Council; (10) a revision on the use and wear of the Commander-General's Breast Star and the Breast Star for National Officers was enacted; and (11) a proposal to re-invigorate the European & African Commandery with the addition of 3 new Companions of Honor: King Felipe VI of Spain, Duke Miguel Duarte Pio of Portugal, and Prince Davit Bagrationi de Mukhran of Georgia (all of whom are qualifying NATO Officers and influential dignitaries).

On Friday morning, 1 May, the first business session of the 52<sup>nd</sup> MOFW Convention was called to order by C-G Russell, who was assisted by Secretary-General Dennis Morgan. It was determined that a Quorum of Commanderies were present, and C-G Russell praised the work of the Companions at the National Board Meeting that took place the previous evening. New Business began with a vote to accept the minutes from the 51<sup>st</sup> Biennial Convention in Rhode Island and continued with the establishment of special committees to conduct business of the Order and report back on Saturday at the Business meeting. These committees were appointed with committee members and assigned responsibilities. They were as follows: (1) Nomination Committee; (2) Resolution Committee; (3) Credential Committee; (4) Review of Reports Committee; and the (5) Budget Committee. Secretary-General Morgan gave a report of the National Council Meeting, which outlined the business topics and decisions that were made during that meeting. Sec-Gen Morgan reported that all the reports of National Officers had been received and were on file. CAPT Kent Webber, the Sec-Gen for Legislative Affairs also presented his report. C-G Russell inquired about what the Commanderies are doing to recognize veterans. Of particular note were the Rhode Island Commandery's report on the status of their veteran's memorial monument (to be built at the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery), the Hawaii Commandery's offering about their partnership with the DOD, and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Vietnam Conflict program.

## Recap (Continued)

After the discussion, it was determined that a good policy to adopt for our Order would be to become more involved in assisting Congress with identifying the correct leaders for our future. C-G Elect continued with a proposal for new standing Budget and Finance Committee to provide authority on spending, keep us within budget, and assist in solidifying our financial objectives. Past Commander-General Thomas Wiener made a motion to establish a standing committee for IT and Communication for the purpose of overseeing the digitization of all the paper records of the Order, developing a records and storage policy, and looking at the improvement and unification of our website. Finally, another standing committee, the Conventions Committee, was proposed for the purpose of looking at the business of holding our National Conventions and producing a how-to manual for planning them, which include to include policy, cost, and travel. These three committees were approved and members were assigned to them. Secretary-General Dennis Morgan stated that these committees are a good start, but milestones still need to be established with deadlines before the next conference in two years. We have the chance to review, research, and recommend proposed changes to improve the functionality of the Order. It was recommended by Judge Advocate-General Rick Hauck that the committee reports be sent out annually, with the committees providing updates in December and June. C-G Elect Coutermarsh added that the National Budget should be published and disseminated annually (in between conferences). James D' Agostino praised Judge Advocate-General Rick Hauck's as the most comprehensive report that he had seen in all his years. This sentiment was echoed by all the Companions in attendance. He also pointed out and thanked Past Commander-General Thomas Wiener for his 60 years of devotion to the MOWF. This was echoed by a standing ovation for Past C-G Wiener. The meeting was adjourned by Sec-Gen Morgan, and the convention attendees met for group photos and a brief presentation outside at the Moody Garden's Vietnam Memorial. During this session, a prayer was offered by Florida National Delegate and Clergyman Robert Cheeseman, and the Rhode Island Commandery presented Commander-General David Russell with his Past Commander-General's Breast Star. Thus concluded the first business session of the Convention, and the delegates and guests were treated to a sumptuous luncheon buffet.

After lunch, the spouses and guests of the Delegates were treated to a shopping trip on "The Strand" in downtown Galveston, which is adjacent to the waterfront area. Meanwhile, the Companions went into their assigned Special Committee meetings to conduct more business. Friday's evening dinner was "on your own" at one of Galveston's outstanding restaurants. The evening provided free time for all attendees and a chance to enjoy the Hospitality Suite, which most Convention participants lauded as the best in recent Convention memory, if not ever.

On Saturday morning, the second business session began with Sec-Gen Morgan calling for the reports of the Special Committees. C-G Elect Rich Coutermarsh of the Nominations Committee presented the slate of new National Officers, which was voted on and approved unanimously. Past C-G Tom Wiener of the Resolutions Committee presented the proposed National Resolutions for the 52<sup>nd</sup> MOWF Biennial Convention, which were voted on and approved. BG James F. Reed of the Credentials Committee announced that 23 Companions were available to vote. Sec-Gen Morgan of the Review of Reports Committee reported that only 12 out of 20 Commanderies have responded, and he recommended that the next C-G and Sec-Gen should inquire as to why they do not report. LTC James Kenney of the Budget Committee reminded present Companions to complete their expense vouchers and submit them. He also presented the bank account balance and the projected income and expenses for the 2015-2017 biennium. After discussion of the budget, a recommendation was made by Past C-G Tom Wiener to raise the current C-G's travel budget from \$5,000 to \$12,500. After input from C-G Russell, Judge Advocate-General Rick Hauck, and Michigan Commander John Daly, this was made into a formal motion and was approved by a unanimous vote. At this time, Sec-Gen Morgan called for comments from the State Commanderies. Many good ideas were offered, which were successfully captured in the minutes of the meeting. A motion was made to cover the expenses of the Convention Scribe for \$900, which was also approved. Old business was discussed, which included membership, recruiting, and retention. A motion was made to establish a Membership Committee to create a tool set for retention and attracting new members, including marketing strategies to be approved by the Executive Board of the National Council. The committee was approved and membership was appointed to it. For new business, Judge Advocate-General Rick Hauck presented IRS Tax Status and Trademark & Copyright Protection information. Sec-Gen Morgan discussed the results of his Organizing Secretary survey, which he felt were inadequate.

## Recap (Continued)

The comments indicated that the national organization needs to reach out to the Organizing Secretaries and offer more support. A recap of the newly established committees was presented, and they were charged by the C-G meet and trade contact information; prepare to write charters, which are due by December 15, 2015; discuss their mission, vision statement, and scope; and brainstorm their first years activities, all before leaving the convention. Another committee was added to oversee the compliance of being nonprofit, and after a discussion, it was decided to establish the Audit Committee, which was then approved and staffed. The Time and Place Committee was not in attendance, and the location of the next convention is yet to be determined. The Convention then adjourned until the Banquet and Installation of Officers. Thus ended the second business session, and the delegates once again gathered for a great buffet luncheon. Then, Convention delegates, spouses, and guests were treated to outstanding tours of the Bishop's Palace, and the Texas Seaport Museum and Tall Ship Elissa.

Returning to the hotel, all prepared for the MOFW Convention Banquet and ceremonies. Banquet festivities began with a grand reception, where delegates and guests were free to mingle and socialize whilst serenaded by the cocktail lounge pianist. At the Call to Assemble for dinner, the Color Guard from the U. S. Coast Guard, Sector Houston-Galveston presented the Colors, the traditional toasts were made, and dinner was served. Following a wonderful dinner, the closing ceremonies began. The guest speaker was introduced as CAPT Brian Penoyer, the Commander of the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Houston-Galveston and Captain of the port, who spoke on the role of the Coast Guard in the Houston and Texas Gulf Coast region. CAPT Penoyer was presented with an elegantly engraved paddle with the MOFW Insignia in order to commemorate his presentation to the Order. Following this presentation, Commander-General Elect Richard Coutermarsh invested CAPT Penoyer and Commander-General Russell as Admirals in the Texas Navy. C-G Russell ended his command tour by offering brief farewell remarks to the Order. This was followed by the presentation of the MOFW Distinguished Service Medal w/Gold Star to Senior Vice Commander CPT Richard Coutermarsh, Secretary-General LTC Dennis Morgan, Judge Advocate-General MAJ Frederick Hauck, Quartermaster-General CW3 Brad Hopkins, Awards Coordinator CW5 David R. Hathaway, Sr., Treasurer-General COL Charles Daniel McCall (who was not in attendance), and Webmaster-General MAJ George Miller (who was also not in attendance). The Change of Command Ceremony, including the passing of the Colors (C-G Flag) from the outgoing Commander-General David Russell to the new Commander-General Richard Coutermarsh, was then conducted. Both the outgoing Secretary-General Dennis Morgan and the incoming Secretary-General Michael Belcher were involved in the flag exchange. Past C-G Russell then placed the Commander-General's Badge around C-G Coutermarsh's neck. Past C-G Russell, assisted by Past C-G Duane Bartrem (who administered the Oath of Office), installed the new National Officers. Your new National Staff (2015-2017) are Commander-General Richard A. Coutermarsh (TX), Senior Vice Commander-General Orfeo 'Chuck' Trombetta (VA), Junior Vice Commander-General Patricia A. Perryman (TX), Secretary-General Michael E. Belcher (TX), Dep. Secretary-General H. Wayne Nelson (TX), Dep. Secretary-General for Legislative Affairs Kent S. Webber (DC), Treasurer-General Charles D. McCall (PA), Dep. Treasurer-General John J. White III (PA), Registrar-General George Miller (RI), Dep. Registrar-General Raoul A. Riccardi (RI), Judge Advocate-General Frederick L. Hauck Jr. (MA), Dep. Judge Advocate-General Michael Fitzpatrick (RI), Surgeon-General Michael E. Carey (LA), Chaplain-General Rev. Phillip G. Salois (RI), Quartermaster-General Brad Hopkins (RI), Historian-General Joseph M. Crews (TX), Webmaster-General George Miller (RI), and Dep. Webmaster-General Mark G. Hartell (VA).

The Commander-General shared his vision for his term in office, and his first official act in office was to present the MOFW Distinguished Service Medal w/Gold Star to Past Commander-General David H. Russell. He then presented the MOFW Exceptional Service Medals w/Silver Star to Brig Gen Robert Cheeseman, COL Joseph M. Crews, MAJ Michael E. Belcher, MAJ Patricia A. Perryman, and CW5 David R. Hathaway Sr., in recognition of their hard work and dedication in planning, organizing, and running the 52<sup>nd</sup> MOFW Biennial Convention. The C-G then presented Laura Coutermarsh with the MOFW Meritorious Service Medal for her advisorial support and assistance in the preparation of the 52<sup>nd</sup> MOFW Biennial Convention. The Consideration of the Institution of the Order was read by Past Commander-General Thomas Wiener. The C-G then declared the 52<sup>nd</sup> MOFW Biennial Convention closed and said he was looking forward to seeing everyone at the 53<sup>rd</sup> MOFW Biennial Convention in 2017. Thus ended the 52<sup>nd</sup> MOFW Convention and began the 2015-2017 biennium.

**PLEASE NOTE: The Commander-General Elect Coutermarsh and Jr. Vice- Commander Elect Perryman resigned their posts as of 1 Sept 2015. The new officers are posted on page 5.**

# Convention Resolutions

## **MOFW 2015 Resolution: Thank You to the Texas Commandery.**

WHEREAS, the Texas Commandery of the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States during the period April 30<sup>th</sup> through May 2<sup>nd</sup> has acted as Host Commandery for the Fifty-second Biennial Convention of the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States in Galveston, Texas; and

WHEREAS, extraordinary attention to the smallest detail has been paid by this dedicated Commandery; and

WHEREAS, exceptional success was achieved in the areas of hospitality, organization, world-class menus, and historic relevance to this Order and to this nation, and

WHEREAS, the Order and every Convention participant is grateful for the organizational effort, skill, and time expended by the Companions of the Texas Commandery and their associates who made the Convention the success that it was;

NOW, THEREFORE, Be It Resolved, that the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States in Fifty-second Convention assembled hereby congratulates and thanks all Companions and other persons of the Texas Commandery who played a role in the excellent organization of this event.

## **MOFW 2015 Resolution: Resolution to Emulate Programs in Exemplary Schools.**

WHEREAS, the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States has established an outstanding awards programs at the U. S. Air Force Academy, the U. S. Military Academy, the U. S. Naval Academy, the U. S. Coast Guard Academy, the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy, The Citadel, the Virginia Military Institute, and Norwich University, and

WHEREAS, the recent additions to this program, involving the Georgia Commandery with the University of Northern Georgia, and the Texas Commandery with Texas A&M University, are now fully established and have produced exceptional results,

NOW, THEREFORE, Be It Resolved, that State Commanderies of the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States in 52nd Convention assembled are strongly encouraged to emulate these programs by identifying other outstanding academic institutions appropriately qualified for further expansion of the Order's recognition of future leaders in the nation's military organization, and taking the necessary steps to establish the Order's recognition of deserving graduates at those institutions.

## **MOFW 2015 Resolution: To Commend the Rhode Island Commandery.**

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Commandery continues to promote the good of the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States by honoring those veterans who have served, who are serving, and who will serve their country, and

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Commandery has arranged ceremonies that honor veterans of the Vietnam Conflict upon the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of that conflict including a dinner recognizing their service and the presentation of commemorative challenge coins, and

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Commandery has arranged the installation of a monument at the Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery to be dedicated in June 2015 to honor those men and women who have and will wear the uniform in honorable service to their country,

NOW, THEREFORE, Be It Resolved, that the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States in 52nd Convention assembled hereby commends the Rhode Island Commandery for its outstanding achievements in furthering the purposes of the Order, and urges all of our State Commanderies to emulate these achievements in pursuing their own objectives.

## Resolutions (Continued)

MOFW 2015 Resolution: To Commend the Hawaii Commandery.

WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Commandery has established an exemplary ROTC and JROTC Awards Program within its jurisdiction that has not only provided recognition to a numerically significant number of outstanding students of military science, but also garnered the attention and material support of important donors, and

WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Commandery on its own initiative has become a recognized and valued partner in the Department of Defense program to honor the service and significant sacrifices of veterans of the Vietnam Conflict upon the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of that conflict;

NOW, THEREFORE, Be It Resolved, that the Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States in 52nd Convention assembled hereby commends the Hawaiian Commandery, and in particular its Commander, COL Arthur N. Tulak, for their outstanding achievements in furthering the purposes of the Order, and urges all of our State Commanderies to emulate these achievements in pursuing similar objectives in furtherance of the purposes of the Order.

## In Other News...

**Commander-General Orfeo Trombetta, Jr, PhD – Inducted as Exarch of the Exarchate of the United States of America by His Serene Highness Friedrich Duke and Prince of Beaufort-Spontin, Grand Master of the Ordo Sancti Constantini Magni**

On July 18, 2015, Commander-General Orfeo Trombetta, Jr., Military Order of Foreign Wars was formally inducted as the Exarch of the Exarchate of the United States of America, Ordo Sancti Constantini Magni (Order of Saint Constantine the Great). The Order is an Ecumenical Order established as a knight society in Switzerland. Today, the Exarchate of the United States of America is the second largest in the world.



**Exarch and Knight Commander Trombetta, Prince Friedrich, and Knight Commander Wulf Lindenau pose for a photograph in front of the Exarchate's newly acquired formal banner of the Order.**

The actual induction ceremony was conducted by His Serene Highness Friedrich von Beaufort-Spontin, Grand Master of the Order in a manner reminiscent of the "days of old, when knights were bold". After Knight Commander Trombetta was inducted as the Exarch, he assisted the Prince in ceremonies knighting two additional knights and one dame of the Order. The entire assemblage then moved to the main ballroom where they were seated for a formal dinner. These elegant ceremonies and black-tie formal dinner were held at the Army Navy Club in Washington, D.C. and were attended by many of the national Knights and Dames of the Order. Additional attendees were close friends of Exarch Trombetta and his wife, Dame Elizabeth Trombetta. The dinner included a multi-course dinner consisting of soup, salad, meat and fish entrée with all of the fixings, including red and white wines, and other beverages and a wonderful Italian desert. Entertainment during dinner was provided by the internationally known Strolling Strings.

# Volunteers Needed

A variety of new committees were established during the 52nd convention. If you have any expertise or interest in volunteering for any of the following committees; please contact COL Arthur Tulak at [Arthur.tulak@earthlink.net](mailto:Arthur.tulak@earthlink.net)

**National Awards Committee**

**Budget and Finance Committee**

**IT and Communication Committee**

**Governance Committee**

**Nominations Committee**

**Credentials Committee**

**Review of Reports Committee**

**Membership Committee**

**Audit Committee**

**Time and Place Committee**

